



16 ^{01 35} ~~Department of State~~

**OUTGOING
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~~SECRET~~

NOD368

PAGE 01 STATE 290640
ORIGIN NODS-00

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*MIG-23
(in eyes
only
envelope)*

0 160045Z NOV 78 ZFF6

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, UR, US, CU

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO SOVIETS ON MIG-23'S IN CUBA

1. THE SECRETARY CALLED IN AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN EVENING OF NOVEMBER 14 TO MAKE DEMARCHE ON SOVIET DEPLOYMENT OF MIG-23 AIRCRAFT TO CUBA. FOLLOWING ARE TALKING POINTS WHICH SECRETARY MADE TO DOBRYNIN:

-- WE HAVE SOME EVIDENCE OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE ARE MIG-23 (RN) OR MIG-27 AIRCRAFT IN CUBA. THESE TWO TYPES OF AIRCRAFT HAVE AN AIR TO GROUND FUNCTION AND AS A CATE-
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GOPY DIFFER FROM THE OTHER MIG AIRCRAFT WHICH THE SOVIET UNION HAS PROVIDED TO CUBA. THROUGHOUT THE YEARS SINCE THE 1962 UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN US, THESE OTHER MIG AIRCRAFT HAVE HAD INTERCEPTOR MISSIONS AND HAVE BEEN AIR TO AIR.

-- WE THINK IT WOULD BE BEST IF NO GROUND ATTACK AIRCRAFT WERE PROVIDED TO THE CUBANS. THIS IS A MATTER OF CONSIDERABLE CONCERN TO US.

-- QUESTIONS WOULD CERTAINLY BE RAISED IN THIS COUNTRY AS TO WHETHER THE PROVISION OF AIR TO GROUND AIRCRAFT

IS CONSISTENT WITH THE 1962 UNDERSTANDING. IT WOULD RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SOVIET FULFILLMENT OF ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THAT UNDERSTANDING.

2. FOLLOWING IS CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE (ON IF ASKED BASIS) PREPARED FOR NOVEMBER 15 NOON PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. WOULD YOU COMMENT ON THE REPORT THAT THERE ARE MIG-23 AIRCRAFT IN CUBA?

A. A LIMITED NUMBER OF THESE AIRCRAFT ARE NOW IN CUBA AND WE HAVE HAD THIS MATTER UNDER ACTIVE INVESTIGATION AND CAREFUL STUDY FOR SOME TIME.

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Q. DO WE CONSIDER THE PRESENCE OF THESE AIRCRAFT IN CUBA A VIOLATION OF THE 1962 UNDERSTANDING WITH THE SOVIET UNION?

A. WE ARE ACTIVELY PURSUING THIS MATTER TO DEVELOP THE FACTUAL SITUATION. WE REGARD WITH THE UTMOST SERIOUSNESS UNDERSTANDINGS OF THIS CHARACTER WITH THE SOVIET UNION AS WELL AS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. THEREFORE, THIS IS A QUESTION WE ARE CAREFULLY INVESTIGATING.

Q. ARE THE MIG-23'S NUCLEAR-CAPABLE?

A. AS I HAVE SAID, WE ARE PURSUING THE MATTER ACTIVELY TO DEVELOP THE FACTS.

Q. WILL THIS HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS?

A. WE SEE NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. WILL IT HAVE AN EFFECT ON U.S. RELATIONS WITH CUBA?

A. THIS IS A MATTER WHICH WILL BE DETERMINED AS PART OF OUR INVESTIGATION OF THE OVERALL QUESTION.

Q. HAVE WE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE SOVIETS ABOUT OUR CONCERN OVER THEIR SENDING THESE AIRCRAFT TO CUBA?

A. I HAVE NO COMMENT ON THIS POINT. I CAN ONLY SAY THAT WE ARE MONITORING THE SITUATION CLOSELY.

Q. HAVE WE TAKEN IT UP WITH CUBA?

A. NO COMMENT.

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Q. HAS THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP BEEN BRIEFED?

A. (TAKE IT).

3. YOU ARE RECEIVING BY SEPTTEL A NOVEMBER 15 COLUMN BY EVANS AND NOVAK WHICH GIVES A SENSATIONALIZED ACCOUNT OF THE MIG-23 AIRCRAFT IN CUBA.

4. IN YOUR DISCUSSION WITH CODEL RIBICOFF, YOU SHOULD STICK TO POINTS CONTAINED IN THE PRESS GUIDANCE. AT YOUR DISCRETION, YOU MAY INFORM SENATORS INDIVIDUALLY, HOWEVER, THAT THE SECRETARY HAS SPOKEN TO DOBRYNIN, THAT WE ARE AWAITING HIS RESPONSE, AND THAT IN THE INTERIM WE HOPE TO HOLD DOWN THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION. YOU MAY ADD THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL BRIEF THE SENATORS ON THE MATTER UPON THEIR RETURN FROM THE SOVIET UNION. VANCE

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